

November 8, 2007 is Winter Weather Awareness Day in Iowa

The National Weather Service in conjunction with the Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management has declared November 8, 2007 as Winter Weather Awareness Day in Iowa.

Each year, winter returns to Iowa and can produce snow storms, blizzards, ice storms and periods of extremely cold temperatures and dangerous wind chills. To help prepare for the upcoming winter season, informative winter safety information is available on the [National Weather Service Des Moines website](#). (link to winter weather preparedness page on the DMX web site).

Two major winter weather events occurred late last winter which had a significant impact across Iowa. The events happened within several days of each other.

February 24-26, 2007 Snow and Ice Storm

A major snow and ice storm struck the state on February 24th and continued into the 25th. Widespread icing occurred which resulted in significant impacts. Damage included widespread power outages due to thousands of downed power lines. At the height of the storm, at least 265,000 customers were without power. Some areas were without power for well over a week. The hardest hit areas were northeast and east of Des Moines in Poweshiek, Marshall, Tama and Black Hawk counties.

In addition to the ice, heavy snow also fell during this storm with 6 to 12 inches common across western Iowa. Strong winds combined with the snow to produce near blizzard conditions.

The February 24-26, 2007 storm was one of the worst ice storms to impact Iowa in the past 40 years.

March 1-2, 2007 Blizzard

Within a week of the February 24-26 ice and snow storm, a major blizzard occurred over western Iowa. Heavy snow and very strong northwest winds combined to produce widespread blizzard conditions. The combination of heavy falling snow, a deep snowpack from the storm a week before and very strong winds resulted in almost all rural roads over western Iowa becoming impassible in a short amount of time. Hundreds of people became stranded and the National Guard was called out to perform rescue missions.

A large area of northwest Iowa received over 10 inches of snow with the heaviest totals at 17 inches in Estherville and Carroll. Drifts of 5 to 10 feet were common with 16 foot drifts reported in Carroll. The blizzard was considered the worst blizzard in decades over western Iowa. In Carroll for example, the blizzard was the worst since the blizzard of 1947.

The significant storms last winter clearly show the need for Iowans to take winter weather safety seriously. Please visit the winter weather safety website to learn how to protect yourself and your family from the dangers of winter weather. Another excellent website for family safety is www.bereadyiowa.org.



Figure 1 Downed power lines in northeast Iowa from the February 24-26, 2007 storm.

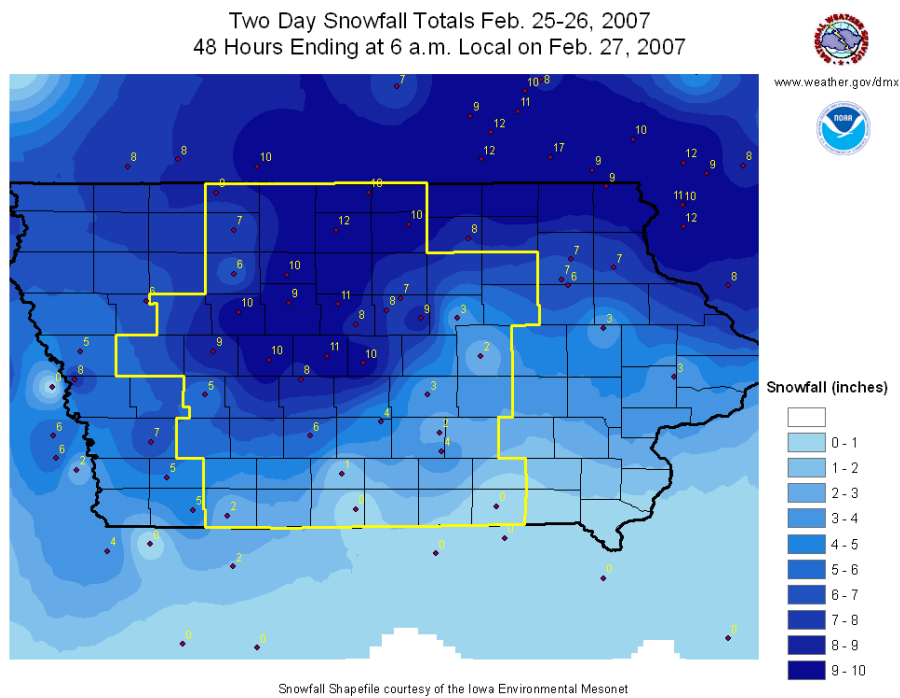
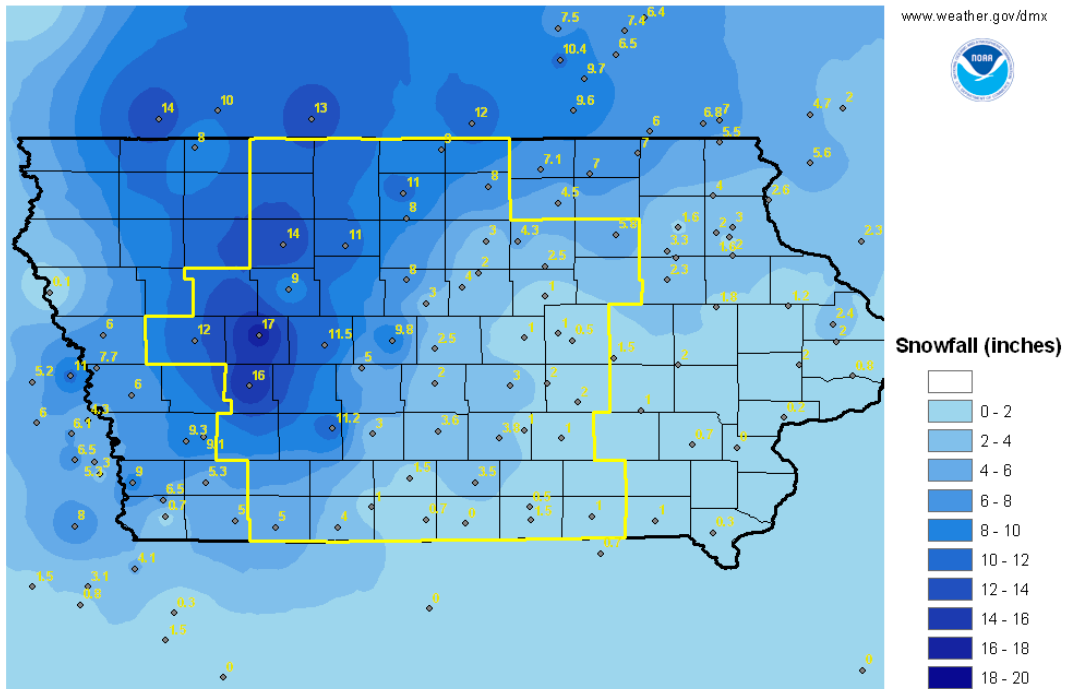


Figure 2 48 hour snowfall totals February 25-26, 2007.



Figure 3 Cleaning up after the March 1-2 Blizzard, Courtesy IDOT.

Snowfall Totals Mar. 2 2007
24 Hours Ending at 6 a.m. Local



Snowfall Shapefile courtesy of the Iowa Environmental Mesonet using NWS Cooperative Observer Data

Figure 4 Snowfall totals from the March 1-2, 2007 Blizzard.